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ŚRĪ PUṞAMBIYAM

BY

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There is a famous verse in the Udayendiram plates of Pṛthivīpati II Hastimalla which runs:

> Yaḥ śrīpuṟambiya mahāhava mūrdhni dhīraḥ
> Pāṇḍyeśvaram Varaguṇam sahasā vijitya|
> Kṛtvārthayuktam Aparājitaśabdam ātma-
> Prāṇavyayena suhṛdastridivam jagāma||

It is agreed on all hands that this verse refers to the death of Gaṅga Pṛthivīpati I. And till recently the battle of Śrīpuṟambiyam was dated in 880 A. D. and the Pāṇḍya Varaguṇa, opponent of Aparājita, taken to be Varaguṇavarman who was the son of Śrī Māra Śrī Vallabha and ruled from A. D. 862-880.

In a recent memoir—"Pṛthivīpati I, Varaguṇa and Aparājita"[1] —Mr. M. Somasekhara Sarma has reopened the question and sought to prove that the battle was fought much earlier than 880 A. D. and that Varaguṇa of the verse cited above must have been Varaguṇa I whose reign extended according to his calculations from A. D. 768 to 818.

The importance of a correct understanding of this celebrated battle can hardly be exaggerated, and it is therefore necessary to examine the arguments on which Mr. Sarma bases his new conclusions.

One preliminary question may be cleared out of the way. Recent studies in Pallava chronology have gone to show that Nṛpatuṅga's reign lasted for some years beyond 880 A. D.; Mr. Sarma gives him the period A. D. 863-888, and this may well be accepted; but considering that the conquest of Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam by Āditya I Cōḷa from Aparājita took place about 890 A. D.,[2] it has to be necessarily assumed that the eighteen years or so of Aparājita's rule for the most part overlapped those of Nṛpatuṅga. And if this was so, Aparājita must

1. JOR, ix, pp. 210-237.
2. *Cōḷas*, i, p. 136.

have fought at Śrīpuṟambiyam on behalf of Nṛpatuṅga[1], that is supposing that that battle was fought in 880 A.D. Unfortunately, we have no direct evidence on the relation of Aparājita to Nṛpatuṅga. The dates advocated by Sarma for the later Pallava kings are calculated throughout on the assumptions that the rule of one king came to an end with his last regnal year found in inscriptions, and that his successor began his rule only after the demise of the predecessor. These assumptions may or may not be true, but may pass as working hypotheses. In the case of the Cōḷas where epigraphical evidence is copious, the decisive calculations of Kielhorn showed that overlapping reigns were the rule. And there is no reason to think that this feature was a monopoly of the Cōḷas.

We may now turn to Mr. Sarma's arguments. He asks first: What authority is there for assigning 880 A. D. as the date of the death of Pṛthivīpati I ? The answer is that scholars like Hultzsch, Fleet and Dubreuil, working from different points of view, have reached this date, and it is found to work quite well. In fact, as already observed, we can be sure of any of these dates only as approximations within five or even ten years.

One important link in the evidence relating to the date of Pṛthivīpati I is the fact that he is mentioned in two records from Āmbūr, North Arcot, dated in the twenty-sixth year of Nṛpatuṅga.[2] Mr. Sarma holds that Pirudi-gaṅgaraiyar of these records should be taken to be not Pṛthivīpati I as Hultzsch did, and all the others who have followed him, but Pṛthivīpati II. Why? "Since Pṛthivīpati," says Mr. Sarma, "mentioned in the Āmbūr records of Nṛpatuṅga's 26th regnal year, *i. e.* A. D. 880 (possibly later), and Pṛthivīpati II, son of Māramarayar mentioned in the Takkōlam record[3] (assigned to 894 or 895 A. D.) are separated from each other only by a short interval of about 15 years, it is not unreasonable to hold that they are identical." "If this identification be accepted," he adds, "it is impossible that the battle of Śrīpuṟambiyam could have been fought in A. D. 880. Therefore this date has to be rejected."[4]

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1. Cf. Sarma at JOR, ix, p. 231;
   contra Pāṇḍyan Kingdom, p. 77.
2. EI, iv, pp. 180-3.
3. Of Āditya Cōḷa.
4. JOR, ix, p. 216.

I do not see why Mr. Sarma should feel disturbed at the shortness of the interval between the Āmbūr records and the Takkōlam record. There should be no difficulty in believing that grandfather and grandson (Pṛthivīpati I and II) were contemporaries for part of their lives, and much might happen, and it seems, in fact, did happen, in the interval of the few years (only five or six years according to Mr. Sarma) betwen the close of Nṛpatuṅga's reign and the date of the Takkōlam record of Āditya. The Pallava power ceased to exist, the Cōḷas rose in prominence, and the feudatories of the former (including Pṛthivīpati II) had to change their allegiance accordingly. Mr. Sarma has somehow convinced himself that "Pṛthivīpati I must have lived long before his grandson Pṛthivīpati II, the vassal of Nṛpatuṅga."[1] This is the root cause of his search for a new date for Śrīpuṟambiyam and a new identification of the Varaguṇa who lost this battle.

But he has not succeeded in his quest. He has landed himself in great, in fact insoluble, difficulties. For if Śrīpuṟambiyam was fought and lost in fact by Varaguṇa I, a glorious monarch who in reality seems to have known no defeat in his long reign, who was Aparājita? Mr. Sarma can only answer: "It is for future research to decide who this Aparājita was",[2] or "the term may be interpreted as a title rather than as the personal name of the king,"[3] a suggestion which to my mind seems to be precluded by the wording of the verse which I think indulges in a play on the personal name of the ally or Pṛthivīpati rather than on one of his titles; and Mr. Sarma is aware that Aparājita is the personal name of the last Pallava ruler overthrown by Āditya I, according to the Tiruvālaṅgāḍu plates.

Mr. Sarma quotes my remark: "It seems strange that the victor of Śrīpuṟambiyam appears to have left no inscriptions to the south of Kāñcīpuram," in support of his new position. But I made the remark in the belief that Aparājita had a long reign as sole ruler of the Pallava kingdom after Nṛpatuṅga. And if, as it now seems, Aparājita and Nṛpatuṅga ruled conjointly for several years, and Aparājita was overthrown by Āditya in a few years, two or three, after Nṛpatuṅga ceased to reign, then we

1. JOR, ix, p. 219.
2. *ib.* p. 230.
3. *ib.* p. 230.

may assume that Aparājita was normally ruling over the area from which his inscriptions come, and that, in an emergency, he marched south with his ally Pṛthivīpati I to give battle on the Pāṇḍyan frontier and that his success put off the evil day for the Pallava power by some years.

There is just one more point in Mr. Sarma's argument. In the 18th year of Nṛpatuṅgavarman, a Pāṇḍya Varaguṇa-mahārāja made a large endowment in Tiruvadi.[1] This was doubtless Varaguṇa II. Mr. Sarma argues that as Varaguṇa was the friend of Nṛpatuṅga and a foe of Aparājita, therefore Aparājita and Nṛpatuṅga must have been enemies and their conjoint rule over a common territory becomes inexplicable.[2] This somewhat startling application of the bookish theory of the Maṇḍala on interstate relations is a clear warning against our putting too much faith in our own theories. The Tiruvadi inscription, in fact, fits in very well with the other known facts of the relations between Pāṇḍyas and Pallavas in this period. The Bāhūr plates of Nṛpatuṅgavarman narrate how he gained a great victory in his youth against the Pāṇḍyas on the banks of the Aricit (Ariśilār), also perhaps fought near Kumbhakōṇam, like Śrīpuṟambiyam later. The battle of Aricit must have been towards the close of the reign of Śrī Māṟa Śrīvallabha, and since then the Pāṇḍyas must have recognised Pallava dominance in some way.[3] The Tiruvadi inscription must be taken to belong to this period of subordinate alliance with the Pallavas which must have been irksome to the Pāṇḍyas. Varaguṇa's attempt to shake off this relation which ended in the disaster of Śrīpuṟambiyam came at least eight years later, *i. e.* after the twenty-sixth year of Nṛpatuṅgavarman.

The result of this discussion goes to show the soundness of the chronology and identifications relating to the battle of Śrīpuṟambiyam on which we have been working so far; only the date 880 A. D. for the battle must be treated as a good approximation rather than as an immovably fixed date; and few will yet be prepared to treat many dates in Indian History as anything more.

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1. 360 of 1921.
2. JOR, ix, p. 233.
3. Pāṇḍyan Kingdom, pp. 74-77.

AN APPEAL.

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All Communications should be addressed to the Correspondent, Journal of Oriental Research, 5, North Mada St., Mylapore, P.O., Madras, South India.

ŚĒNDAN DIVĀKARAM

By

Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, M.A.,

Barring the lexical section of *Tolkāppiyam*, the *Divākaram* is the earliest Tamil lexicon to which we have access.* This work is generally taken to have been composed by Divākarar under the patronage of Śēndan (Jayanta), a chieftain of Ambar. Like that of many other works, the date of the *Divākaram* is largely a matter for conjecture. The view that it must have been composed before the middle of the eighth century may be accepted tentatively, though, in the present state of the text of the work, one should hesitate to accept as conclusive the arguments with which this conjecture is supported.

Let us examine the colophons to each of the divisions (togudis) of this work. I reproduce them below. Mr. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, and Pandit M. Raghava Aiyangar, have kindly allowed me the use of their copies of the book in which they have indicated the *variae lectiones* got by them by the collation of several manuscripts of the work.

Col. to section I.

வடநூற் கரசன் தென்றமிழ்க் கவிஞன்
கவியரங் கேறு[1] முபயகவிப் புலவன்
செறிகுணத் தம்பர் கிழவோன் சேந்தன்
அறிவுகரி யாக[2]த் தெரிசொற் றிவாகரத்து
முதலாவது தெய்வப்பெயர்த் தொகுதி முற்றும்

1. கேற்று. 2. அறிவுக்கறிவாக.

Col. to section II.

சேந்தன் பெருமையின் பெயர்[3]:—
கற்ற நாவினன் கேட்ட செவியினன்
முற்று முணர்ந்த[4] மூதறி வாளன்
நாகரிக நாட்டத்தன் ஆ[5]ரியன் அருவந்தை
தேருங் காட்சிச் சேந்தன் திவாகரத்து
இரண்டாவது மக்கட்பெயர்த் தொகுதி முற்றும்.

3. The whole phrase occurs in only one ms. 4. முற்ற வுணர்ந்த. 5. நாட்டத்தாரியன்.

*Tamil Lexicon, Ed.'s Introdn., pp. xxvi-vii.

Col. to section III.

காத லீகையிற் போதியிற் பெருந்தவன்[6]
தெவ்வடு கால வைவே லெழினி
அவ்வை பாடிய வம்பர்[7] கிழவன்
றென்னூர்ச் சேந்தன் றெரிசொற்[8] றிவாகரத்து[9]
மூன்றாவது விலங்கின் பெயர்த்தொகுதி முற்றும்.

6. போதிப்பெருந்தவன். 7. வம்பற் 8. தெரித்த சொற். 9. துள்.

Col. to section IV.

திவாகர வரலாற்றின் பெயர்[10] :—
நாடே பிற[11] நாட்டிற் குவமை யாறே
காலம் அறிந் துதவுங் காவிரி தானே
ஆடவர் திலகன் அம்பர்[12] மன்னன்
நீடிசைத் தலைவன் அருவந்தைச் சேந்தன்[13]
ஆய்ந்த திவாகரத் தரும்பொருள் விளக்கும்[14]
நான்காவது மரப்பெயர்த் தொகுதிமுற்றும்.

10. Occurs in only one ms. 11. பிறர். 12. ல், ற். 13. சேந்தனருவந்தை. 14. விளங்கும்.

Col. to section V.

திவாகர வரலாற்றின் பெயர்[15] :—
ஒருவர்[16] க்கொருவ ரா[17]கி[18] யுதவியும்
பரிசின்[19] மாக்கள் பற்பல ராயினும்[20]
தானொரு வன்னே தரணி மானவன்[21]
செந்தமிழ்ச் சேந்தன் தெரிந்த[22] திவாகரத்து
ஐந்தாவது இடப்பெயர்த் தொகுதிமுற்றும்.

15. Occurs in only one ms. 16. ற். 17. ன. 18. க. 19. யரிசின், பரிசன. 20. ராகியும். 21. திலகம். 22. தெரித்த.

Col. to section VI.

திவாகர வரலாற்றின் பெயர்[23] :—
வருநற் கங்கை வடதிசைப் பெருமையும்
தென்றிசைச் சிறுமையும் நீக்கிய குறுமுனி
குண்டிகைப் பழம்புனற் காவிரிப் பெரும்பதி
அம்பர்க் கதிபதி சேந்தன் திவாகரத்து
ஆறாவது பல்பொருட் பெயர்த்.தொகுதிமுற்றும்.

23. Only in one ms.

Col. to section VII.

முற்றவப் பயனோ கற்றவப் பயனோ
சாபத் திழுக்கிய தேவ சாதரில்
தோற்ற முடையனென வம்பர்த் தோன்றிய[24]
இயற்கைச் சேந்தன் தெரிந்த[25] திவாகரத்து
ஏழாவது செயற்கைவடிவப்பெயர்த் தொகுதி முற்றும்.

24. அம்பற்றோன்றிய. 25. தெரிந்த omitted in some mss.

Col. to section VIII.

திவாகரச் சேந்தன் பெருமைப் பெயர்[26] :—
மறக்குறும் போட்டி அறத்தின்வழி நின்று
கவிகைத் தண்ணளி புவிபெற வாணியின்
ஐம்புல னுளும் அம்பர்[27] க்கோமான்
திண்பெருஞ் சேந்தன் திவாகரத் தெட்டாவது
பண்புபற்றிய பெயர்த் தொகுதிமுற்றும்.

26. Only in one ms. 27. ற்.

Col. to section IX

சேந்தன் பிரதாபப் பெயர்[28] :—
அண்ணல் செம்பாதிக் காணி யாட்டியை
பெண்ணணங்கை மூவுலகும் பெற்ற வம்மையை
செந்தமிழ் மாலை யந்தாதி புனைந்த
நாவல னம்பர் காவலன் சேந்தன்
இயல்வுற்ற[29] திவாகரத் தொன்பதாவது
செயல்பற்றிய பெயர்த் தொகுதிமுற்றும்.

28. Only in one ms. 29. செய்கையுற்ற, செயல்பற்றிய.

Col. to section X.

சேந்தன் கவித்திறத்தின் பெயர்[30] :—
அரக்கரைப் பொருத முரட்போர் வில்லும்
பாரதம் பொருத பேரிசைச் சிலையும்
தாருகற் கடிந்த வீரத் தயிலும்[31]
பாடிய புலவன் பதியம்பர்ச் சேந்தன்
பயில்வுற்ற திவாகரத்துப் பத்தாவது
ஒலிபற்றிய பெயர்த் தொகுதிமுற்றும்.

30. Only in one ms. 31. வீரபத்திரவேல், வீரியந்தனிவேல்

Col. to section XI.

புலவி நீக்கிய கல்விச் செல்விக்
கமிழ்துசுவை யீந்த வரும்பெற லின்பத்
தொருபெருஞ் செல்வ னருவந்தைச் சேந்தன்
பகர்வுற்ற திவாகர[32]த்துப் பதினொராவது
ஒருசொற் பல்பொருட் பெயர்த் தொகுதிமுற்றும்.

32. பகர்சொற்றிவாகரத்து.

Col. to section XII.

திவாகரஞ் சிறப்பித்த சேந்தன் பெருமைப் பெயர்[33] :—
செம்பொற் குடையான்[34] அம்பர்ச் சேந்தன்
நன்னராளன் நலமிகு நாட்டத்தன்[35]

பன்னிய[36] சிறப்பிற் பன்னிரண்டாவது
பல்பொருட் கூட்டத்தொரு பெயர்த் தொகுதி[37] முற்றும்.

33. Only in one ms. 34. கொடைக்கை. 35. ஙனிநாகரிகன். 36. நாட்டத்துப் பகர்சொற்றிவாகரத்து. 37. தொகுதியொடு பன்னிருதொகுதியும் பண்பொடு முற்றின.

If we had only these colophons before us, it seems to me that there would be little room for any doubt about the names of the author of the lexicon and of the lexicon itself. We would normally conclude that Śēndan, a learned scholar well versed in Tamil and Sanskrit, was the author of the lexicon called Divākaram. Besides being learned in the two languages, Śēndan was the lord of Ambar, which need not mean that he was a chieftain or princeling, but may only indicate that he had received either a good part or the whole of the lands in Ambar as his '*Jagir*' from some contemporary monarch. The colophons mention his great distinction in making charitable gifts and in the domain of literature, and little of his capacity to rule or to fight. The phrases மறக்குழும் போட்டி and திண்பெருஞ்சேந்தன் (VIII) are the nearest approach to his being treated as a warrior, but even here the context raises a real doubt if it is not a metaphor on self-control and war with the senses. The expression செம்பொற் குடையான் (Col. XII) is not secure as we have an alternative செம்பொற் கொடைக்கை which may be the true reading. It is perhaps worthwhile noting in passing that the mention of E̲lini and Avvai (in Col. III) should more properly be referred to Ambar, and not to Śēndan himself, as it seems extremely improbable that Śēndan's work lies so far back as the time of Avvai who celebrated in song both the chieftain E̲lini and the city of Ambar. Likewise Aruvandai in Coll. II and XI, should be considered references to a famous old name celebrated in the annals of Ambar, or a family name—in which case Śēndan should be taken to come of a line of hereditary chieftains of Ambar. Of the literary works of Śēndan, these colophons mention an *andādi* on goddess Pārvati (IX), a work or works or at least verses on the themes of the Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata and Tārakāsuravadha—facts which have not attracted as much notice as they deserve to get. If in addition to this, we note also the expressions: சேந்தன் அறிவுகரியாகத் தெரிசொல் திவாகரம் I, சேந்தன் திவாகரம் II, VI, VIII, சேந்தன் தெரிசொற்றிவாகரம் III, சேந்தன் ஆய்ந்த திவாகரம் IV, சேந்தன் தெரிந்த திவாகரம் V, VII, சேந்தன் இயல்வுற்றதிவாகரம் IX, சேந்தன் பயில்வுற்ற திவாகரம் X, சேந்தன் பகர்வுற்ற திவாகரம் XI, சேந்தன் பன்னிய or பகர்சொல் திவாகரம் XII,

there seems to be little room for doubt that Śēndan was himself the author of the Divākaram. Let me note, however, that the expression அறிவுகரியாகத் தெரிசொல் may be held by some to support the traditional view that Divākaram was the work of another writer just patronised by Śēndan; but the expression need not necessarily mean that Śēndan was only a patron in whose presence the work was completed or published; and it may well mean that Śēndan made a lexicon of all words selected by his trained intelligence; and the direct statements in the other colophons that he composed the work (பகர்வுற்ற, பன்னிய and so on) support the view that Śēndan was himself the author. There is the entry before colophon XII attested by only one Ms. which reads 'திவாகரஞ் சிறப்பித்த சேந்தன் பெருமைப்பெயர்' and this states clearly that Śēndan made Divākaram famous i.e., patronized it. But this and similar entries before some other colophons cited above are not attested by all Mss. and, I think, may be ignored in any critical discussion of the authorship of the work. And it is quite probable, on the supposition that the real authorship of the Divākaram was for some reason forgotten in later times, that the entry was put in in this form by some scribe who pinned his faith on the theory current in his time that Śēndan patronised the work.

Divākaram is a fine name for a lexicon. It implies that the work sheds a clear light (sun light) on the meanings of words. And the colophons to the work, which, by their style, may well claim to be the work of the author himself, show clearly that this was the name he gave to his work. And the phrase Śēndan Divākaram present in some of these colophons seems easier to understand if we accept Śēndan's authorship than on the assumption that another author, Divākaran by name, composed the work and praised his patron in the colophons; for this involves the two-fold assumption that the author called the work after himself, and that he decided also to celebrate his patron by prefixing his name to that of the work so called.

What then is the basis for the current view of the authorship of the work? In the pāyiram of the Pingala Nigaṇḍu we read:

செங்கதிர் வரத்தால் திவாகரன் பயந்த
பிங்கல முனிவன் தன்பெயர் நிறீஇ
யுரிச்சொற் கிளவி விரிக்குங் காலை.

Here we learn that the author of the Nigaṇḍu was a certain sage Pingalar by name, and born of Divākara by the grace of the

Sun. It will be noticed that there is no connection whatever between Divākara and a lexicon in this context except through his son Pingala. We get to the next stage in a mythical account of the history of lexicography that prefaces the Cūḍāmaṇi Nigaṇḍu of Maṇḍalapuruṣa. In this the author says that the Jina made the original lexicon from which the gaṇadharas and others made two other lexicons. Then follows the verse :

அங்கது போய பின்றை யலகினூல் பிறந்த மற்றுஞ்
செங்கதிர் வரத்திற் றோன்றுந் திவாகரர் சிறப்பின் மிக்க
பிங்கல ருரைநூற் பாவிற் பேணினர் செய்தார் சேர
இங்கிவை யிரண்டுங் கற்க வெளிதல வென்று சூழ்ந்து.

In this verse, Maṇḍalapuruṣa states that countless lexicons followed the three primitive works of jain origin, and further, Divākara who was born of a boon of the sun, and the famous Pingalar made two lexicons in verse, and that Maṇḍalapuruṣa considering the difficulty of learning both these works together, (produced his own work). Here we find the direct connection between Divākara and a lexicon for the first time ; but notice that it is Divākara, and not his son, that is born by the grace of the sun ; and further there is no statement of any direct relation between Divākara and Pingala as father and son.

Now it seems from this that Maṇḍalapuruṣa's account must be deemed earlier than that contained in the Pāyriam of Pingala-Nigaṇḍu. Maṇḍala gives an account of the sources of his work. They were the Divākaram and Pingala Nigaṇḍu. His theory of the authorship of the Divākaram seems to be a guess based on the name of the work, in keeping with the mythical origin of Tamil lexicography he adumbrates in the preceding verse ; and the celebrated Pingalar சிறப்பின் மிக்க பிங்கலர் is the first fully human author he is prepared to recognise. And the author of the pāyiram of the Pingala-Nigaṇḍu goes one step further and makes Pingala, the son of Divākara, by the grace of the Sun.

It seems to me from all this that Divākarar, the author of the Divākaram, and the relation postulated between him and Pingalar, are both figments of imagination. The real author of the Divākaram was Śēndan.

There is one possible objection to this view. Would Śēndan have written all the flattering references to himself in the colophons? I would answer, it is not improbable ; compare the final verse in the

hymns of Gñānasambandar for instance. Again, would Śēndan have cited himself as the example, as he does, of கொடை மடம் an expression which means 'giving gifts without limit'? *

> திடமொழி யம்பர்ச் சேந்தனை யேய்ந்த
> கொடைமடம் வரையாது கொடுத்த லாகும்.

This too may be explained as written in a spirit similar to that in which Dr. Johnson in his dictionary defined Grub Street or lexicographer.

I have set forth the considerations that have occurred to me on the question of the authorship of the Divākaram. I am no specialist in Tamil, and I am well aware that the definitive settlement of this question will take much more research than I am capable of. My aim has been the more limited one of drawing attention to certain *prima facie* considerations that seem to deserve discussion on the question of the authorship of the earliest extant Nigaṇḍu in Tamil. There is no greater need than a critical edition of this classic based on a careful collation of all the MSS. available, and I have no doubt that when such an edition is undertaken by a competent scholar, he will be in a position to decide authoritatively most of the questions which have been touched on in the course of this note.

* Note on *koḍai-maḍam*: This is a very interesting word. Maḍam comes from Skt. Maṭha which Amarasimha defines as *chātrādinilayaḥ*, residence of students and others. In Tamil the word has perhaps a closer connection with free feeding, a choultry or sattra. The word sattra in Sanskrit has several meanings. To quote Amarasimha again:

> *Satram ācchādane yajñe sadādāne vanepi ca.*

Satram means thus: (1) a cloth, (2) a sacrifice, (3) constant giving, and (4) forest. The third of these meanings exactly corresponds to koḍai-maḍam of Tamil, and stands also in close relation to free feeding. This meaning gives rise therefore to the expression *annasatram*, a place where there goes on constant free feeding, and koḍai-maḍam, i.e., a maḍam not only for feeding but for free gifts of all kinds. I may note, however, that the current view of this word is to derive it from மடமை ignorance. Vide Puṟam, 142, Commentary.

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Reform of Secondary Education.

BY K. A. NILAKANTA SASTRI, M.A.

OUR educational system is being roundly condemned by official reports and non-official utterances alike, but little is being *done* for effecting a reform. I suggest a few points of immediate importance for the consideration of those who are in a position to carry out the changes if they are accepted as desirable.

The secondary schools at present conspicuously lack almost all the essential characteristics of real school life. They are just places to which boys and girls go for receiving a few lessons meant to fit them ultimately for securing eligibility in the public examination at the end of the course. Frankly, there is no attempt to discover talent, to encourage thinking and initiative, or to provide a social life conducive to the general development of the pupils. If school education must be worth the name, the school must be a much more cheerful place with a real life of its own, and not the dull uninspiring barrack that it now is. To break through present conditions, and transform them slowly is a difficult task, which needs a steady and sustained effort spread over many years; and the department of education has a great part to play in this development by encouraging the growth of proper conditions in schools.

The first requisite of a proper school life is a capable headmaster, who has clear ideas on education and is a good organiser. Very few schools can be said to take any steps to secure such a headmaster. The headmaster must be a man of talent, specially chosen for his task, and appointed on a salary and under terms of service which would give him a real chance of building up school life as it should be; his work should not be hampered by the fears arising from the chance of being turned out of his job if he showed the slightest signs of thinking and acting for himself.

But the headmaster, however well-chosen, cannot make school life efficient and interesting, unless he is assisted by a competent staff. A self-respecting school-master is, however, becoming increasingly rare. And it is no exaggeration to say that the average school-master looks upon himself as a hireling employed at low wages and in perpetual risk of losing even that employment if he failed to conform to the whims of his employer. The teachers, as a rule, are over-worked, underpaid and maltreated, and in very few instances does the headmaster find it possible to protect them. Teachers who find their personality ground down by such conditions can hardly be expected to build up personality and character in the pupils committed to their charge.

All types of management have much lee-way to make up here: Correspondents and members of the Managing Committees of private aided schools, Presidents of District Boards and Municipalities, and representatives of large Mission Societies of various grades. A very strong case can be made out for the educational department devoting much more attention than it does now towards the regulation of salaries and conditions of service in schools. To abandon these matters to the sweet will of the different managing agencies is bound to perpetuate the hard conditions of the teacher's life, and frustrate all attempts at genuine educational reform. It is only when the teaching staff of a school with the headmaster at its head develops a strong *esprit de corps* and a faith in its vocation, can schools discharge their proper functions in society. In the administration of the grant-in-aid the educational department can, if it chooses, do much for effecting a steady improvement in school conditions in this regard as in other respects. The recent effort to weaken the authority of the department in the Board schools is a retrograde step dictated by extra-educational considerations which cannot be condemned too strongly. The sooner it is reversed the better it will be for true education.

The next requisite of a proper school life is a manageable school. Large schools with enrolments over a

thousand, sometimes going up even to a couple of thousands, hardly deserve the name of school. They contain pupils of all ages from 5 or 6 to 16 or 17, divided into classes each having a large number of divisions,—factors which render an intelligent co-ordination of the work of the school utterly impossible for the ablest headmaster conceivable. Such large units must be split up where they exist at present, and prevented from coming up again in future. It is difficult to lay down any absolute figure as the optimum strength for a school, but it would seem that an effort should be made to keep secondary schools as units in themselves, apart from the elementary and lower secondary or higher elementary classes, and the normal strength of the secondary school should not exceed four or five hundreds. Forty pupils to a class even in secondary schools are as many as a teacher can look after. On no account should this number be exceeded, and an attempt should be made steadily to bring down this number to thirty-five.

A strong and well-organized Inspectorate is necessarily the means by which the department must exercise its functions of regulation and control. Without meaning any reflection on the existing organisation, it may be suggested that its strength may be considerably improved on the educational side by appointing inspectors for particular subjects over specified areas, and constituting the inspectors in all subjects in an area into a sort of a permanent Inspection Board. It seems that such a change may be effected without any increase in cost or loss of administrative efficiency, and a very considerable gain to the academic efficiency and authority of the Inspectorate.